

Old Habits Die Hard: The Influence of Factions in Japan's Liberal Democratic
Party, 1993-2000

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Abstract

Factions have dominated Japan's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) since its inception in 1995. During these postwar years, factions have been portrayed as institutionalized structures used for the distribution of party positions, cabinet appointments, and campaign funds. However, little is known about the influence of factions after the LDP's 1993 split and Japan's 1994 electoral reforms. Both scholars and the public believed these two colossal events would eliminate the LDP's need for factions. Nevertheless, factions continue to flourish in the LDP and significantly impact Japanese politics. This paper will provide an update on the recent activities of the LDP's factions and their impact in areas such as cabinet appointments. Ultimately, I will argue that factions have become institutionalized in the LDP through a combination of historical precedents, party size, and Japan's unique group structure.

Acknowledgements

Prof. Bradley Richardson: Thank you for allowing me to interrupt your peaceful retirement. I am grateful for the time, effort, and patience you have shown me throughout this project. I hope you will make it down to Louisiana someday to share the rest of your life story!

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I would like to dedicate this paper to the “Fabulous Felters,” Tom, Lynette, and Liz. Thank you for endless emotional and financial (!) support during my undergraduate years. I know you were uneasy when I selected political science as a major, but I will not end up working at WalMart – I promise!

A Note on Japanese Names

Traditionally, Japanese names are written with the surname first and the given name second. For example, in the name Tanaka Kakuei, Tanaka is the surname and Kakuei is the given name.

Chapter 1

From the 1955 until 1993, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) dominated Japanese politics by maintaining a majority in both houses of the legislature or Diet. Intra-party factions, *habatsu*, became an integral part of the LDP during these postwar years. Factions have been portrayed as institutionalized structures used for the distribution of party positions, cabinet appointments, and campaign funds (Curtis 1988, Fukui 1970, Neary 2002, Richardson 1999). However, the research on factions concludes before two major developments in the LDP and Japanese politics: (1) In 1993, the LDP split in two after a significant number of Diet members renounced their LDP membership and formed a separate party. (2) In 1994, the Diet passed a package of reforms redesigning the election process for the House of Representatives.

These two developments have produced several questions worthy of further investigation. How have factions fared since 1993? Have factions' primary functions, appointments and campaign funding, remained the same? Which factors or combinations of factors – party size, electoral processes, personal ties, ideology, or other factors – continue to contribute to the existence of factions?

To answer these questions I propose to survey factional and faction member behavior from 1993 until 2000. This task will involve investigating changes in Japanese politics, updating the postwar faction lineages, and examining the role of factions in cabinet and party appointments. I intend to argue that neither key changes in Japanese politics nor the LDP leadership's various attempts to end factions have been successful in

reducing factions' influence. Factions continue to flourish in the LDP and have become a seemingly inevitable part of the system.

In the remainder of Chapter 1, I will provide a more complete definition of the term "faction" and a historical overview of factions from 1955 until 1993. In Chapter 2, I will discuss major changes in Japanese politics that had the potential to change factional behavior. In Chapter 3, I will provide an update on factions' lineages, activities, and reactions to the issues presented in Chapter 2. In Chapter 4, I will examine recent party and cabinet appointments to look for evidence of factions' influence. I will conclude in Chapter 5 by summarizing my findings and speculating on reasons for the continued significance of factions throughout the 1990s.

Factional Motivations

Why should an LDP politician join a faction? What specific benefits are there for faction members and their leaders? What are the ultimate goals of factions? These are all questions that must be addressed before surveying factions' past and present activities.

Scholars agree that there are two primary reasons a LDP politician will join a faction (Curtis 1988, Fukui 1970). The first of these reasons is funding. Running a political campaign in any country is an expensive proposition. In Japan, factions provide a reliable stream of financial support to offset campaign costs. The second motivation for an LDP member has to join a faction involves power. During the postwar era factions have been the driving force behind most party and cabinet appointments. Whenever party or cabinet positions need to be filled, faction leaders submit lists with potential prospects from their faction. The party president/prime minister selects names from these

lists to fill his vacant positions, typically in order of seniority. Once faction members have had a successful run in the Diet (usually at least four terms), there is a legitimate chance their name will appear on one of these lists. Granted, a faction member must also be in good standing with the faction head.

In exchange for campaign funds, party appointments, and cabinet positions each faction member is expected to devote his or her political loyalties to their respective faction leader. A faction head with a strong support base is more likely to gain high-ranking appointments for himself and his members. Historically, the heads of the largest factions (Sato, Tanaka, Takeshita, etc.) have had the most success in securing these positions. This is known as a patron-client relationship or *oyaban-kobun* with the patron as the faction leader and the client consisting of his core group of supporters (Curtis 1989:81).

During the years of multi-member electoral districts it became not only advantageous, but also necessary for the LDP to run multiple candidates in each electoral district in order for the party to obtain a majority in the Diet. New politicians often sought the support of a faction that did not yet have a candidate in his district with hopes of obtaining funds and the necessary political backing to succeed in a Diet campaign (Curtis 1989: 85). This allowed factions to obtain broad bases of support throughout the country.

Historical Overview

The remaining portion of this chapter will be devoted to providing a historical overview of factions from 1955 until 1993. This overview is broken into three

“generations” of factional activity. The first generation includes the role of factions in the LDP’s inception and various developments during the 1960s. The second generation focuses on Tanaka Kakuei and his effects on the structure and purpose of factions. The third and final generation covers factional activities in the post-Tanaka years up until the LDP’s 1993 split. I realize the history of the LDP and its factions may seem overwhelming at times, so I have included Ian Neary’s superb flow chart of factional lineages (see figure 1.1).

First Generation

Factions have existed in the LDP since its creation via the merger of the Liberal Party and the Democratic Party in 1955. These original factions were formed from groupings of politicians from the LDP's two parent parties. Yoshida Shigeru, Ogata Taketora, and Ono Bamboku led the factions of former Liberal Party members. Kishi Nobusuka, Miki Bukichi, and Hatoyama Ichiro led the factions of former Democratic Party members. These men succeeded in solidifying their factional bases by holding monthly meetings during the LDP's first year in existence (Fukui 1970: 108). In addition, faction leaders Hatoyama, Miki, Ogata, and Ono were selected as acting party presidents and became the LDP's first presidential selection committee. This set the prescient for faction leaders securing positions of party authority.

These early factions did not remain in their original state for long. Faction heads Ogata and Miki passed away in 1956, and control of their factions was transferred to Ishii Mitsujiro and Kono Ichiro. These leadership transitions occurred without major intra-faction conflict, but other factions did not fair as well. For example, the Yoshida faction split into two new factions headed by Ikeda Hayato and Sato Eisauku after intense intra-faction fighting. This split marks the first major factional division in the LDP.

By the end of the 1950s, the factional map included groups headed by Ikeda, Ishibashi Tanzan, Ishii, Kishi, Kono, Matsumura Kenzo, Mitsujiro, Ono, and Sato. These factions formed "loose opposing alliances" consisting of "dominant" and "dissident" coalitions (Fukui 1970:108). The larger, or dominant coalition, supported the party's incumbent president, while the smaller, or dissident coalition, opposed the incumbent. Fukui has successfully tracked the development of dominant and dissident coalitions

from the mid-1950s until 1967 (see figure 1.2). These alliances between factions are prime examples of factions functioning as smaller political parties within the LDP.

Figure 1.2. Fukui's Categorization of Factions in the LDP, 1955-67

	Dominant	Dissident	Neutral
Nov. 1955–Dec. 1956	Hatoyama* Ishibashi Kishi Miki, B. Ogata Ono	Ashida Kitamura Miki, T. Oasa Yoshida	
Dec. 1956–Feb. 1957	Ikeda Ishibashi* Ishii Miki, T.	Kishi Kōno Ono Satō	
Feb. 1957–Jan. 1959	Kishi* Kōno Ono Satō	Ikeda Ishii Miki	
Jan. 1959–July 1960	Ikeda Kishi* Ono Satō	Ishii Kōno Miki	
July 1960–July 1962	Fujiyama Ikeda* Kishi Satō	Ishii Kōno Miki Ono	
July 1962–Nov. 1964	Ikeda* Kawashima Kōno Miki Ono	Fujiyama Fukuda Ishii Satō	
Nov. 1964–Jan. 1967	Fukuda Ikeda Ishii Kawashima Miki Satō*	Fujiyama Kōno Ono	
Jan. 1967–	Fukuda Ishii Kawashima Miki Satō*	Fujiyama Matsumura Nakasone	Funada Maeo Mori Murakami

*Indicates the faction whose leader was party president.

Sources: 'Seitō wa kore de yoi no ka', Parts 5 and 6, *Yomiuri*, 6 and 7 January 1966.

Source: Fukui 1970:109.

The coalitions of dominate and dissident factions continued throughout the 1960s. However, multiple divisions significantly increased the number of players on the LDP factional map. Intra-faction fighting split the Kishi faction into three new factions under Fujiyama Aiichiro, Fukuda Takeo, and Kawashima Shojiro. Kono also dealt with intra-faction fighting in his faction, but it remained intact until his death. The remnants of Kono's faction reorganized into two new factions under Nakasone Yasuhiro and Mori Kiyoshi. In addition, Ono's death led to the split of his faction into two groups led by Funada Naka and Murakami Isamu.

The Ikeda and Sato factions were the most successful in obtaining leadership positions during this decade. Unlike the other factions, the Ikeda and Sato groups avoided divisions that reduced the number of their members. Ikeda did pass away, but a smooth leadership transition to Maeo Shigesaburo prevented a split or any serious intra-faction conflict. Sato's political success allowed him to expand the size of his faction to over 100 members. This gave him the support base necessary to become Prime Minister and head of the "dominant" coalition of factions. (Fukui: 1970:112).

Second Generation

The second generation of factions in the LDP is dominated by the actions of Sato's successor, Tanaka Kakuei. Tanaka gained the loyalty of Sato's faction by portraying himself as a younger politician with a stronger future than the aging Sato. Tanaka's promises of money and power ultimately proved to be too tempting for Sato faction members to pass up (Neary 2002: 70). Tanaka's relatively quick success in the

LDP was not duplicated during his tenure as prime minister. Issues including rising oil prices and faction leaders disgruntled with his quick rise to the top made him an intensely controversial figure within the party. His faction members were extremely loyal, but others considered his impulsive style a threat to Japanese democracy. This intra-party conflict escalated after the resignations of the party vice president and finance minister. Rumors of a party split began to spread and a right-wing policy group called Seirankai suggested the formation of a new party. The controversy concluded when “a prominent magazine article implied [Tanaka] had used public office to become rich” (Richardson 1999: 77).

Miki Takeo was selected to follow Tanaka as Prime Minister because his “clean” political record distanced him from Tanaka and the other politicians tainted by the Lockheed Scandal. Miki’s term, however, was defined by Tanaka’s arrest and intra-party rebellion. In protest of the LDP’s association with corruption and the Lockheed Scandal, a group of young LDP members split off from the party and formed the New Liberal Club (NLC). While the NLC dissolved and rejoined the LDP in 1986, its existence did inspire talks of the formation of a new centrist party.

Miki only served one term as prime minister because he was forced to take the fall for the LDP’s poor showing in the 1976 election. The LDP received a bare majority of votes, and rumors of the party’s demise were beginning to spread. His replacement, Fukuda Takeo, served two years, but became a victim of his own confidence after trying to bypass the LDP presidential electoral system. Under Miki, the LDP adopted a new election method for elections where three or more candidates were running for president. This system included a primary vote open to all party members and a runoff vote open to

Diet members. Fukuda claimed the winner of the primary election was entitled to the office because a second election “risked unnecessary conflict” (Neary 2002:71). At the time of this assertion Fukuda was unaware Tanaka had rallied his loyal support base around LDP Secretary General Ohira (of the Maeo, formally Ikeda, faction). Ohira won the primary election in a landslide.

Fukuda resigned as party president to make way for Ohira, but the LDP’s confidence in Ohira was rattled after he showed interest in introducing a new sales tax. Ohira’s comments threw the LDP into turmoil and the party nominated both Fukuda and Ohira for Prime Minister. Tanaka again came to Ohira’s aid, but a no-confidence motion and heart attack forced Ohira to turn control of the Prime Minister’s office to Suzuki Zenko in 1980.

During these events Tanaka continued to lurk in the background. He disbanded his faction in 1977, and set up “informal support groups.” These support groups eventually merged into a reincarnated Tanaka faction, which had expanded to 118 members by the early 1980s. This success revived Tanaka’s hopes of recapturing the prime minister position (Weir 1999:59). Tanaka’s faction had amassed an unusually large number of members during his tenure as party president, but the fact that politicians still flocked to him after his legal woes was unprecedented.

Ono Bamboku, an early faction leader, claimed forty members was the ideal number for balancing faction memberships with appointments and available funding (Curtis 1988:82). Politicians had clearly become more interested in rising to the top as quickly as possible and Tanaka was the mastermind behind such things. Tanaka’s

attempt to create a large faction forced other factions to resort to the same tactics. This resulted in the dissolution of several smaller factions like Mori and Kawashima.

Third Generation

The third generation of factions is defined by Tanaka's decline and widespread scandals. Tanaka's influence began to dissipate during Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro's first term. Tanaka recovered from a stroke in time to run against Nakasone in 1986, but Tanaka's time as the party's official leader had come to a close. Control of the 113 member faction was transferred to Takeshita Noboru, but Tanaka continued to influence the party in an unofficial capacity. Takeshita secured the presidency in 1987 after defeating Abe Shintaro, head of the former Fukuda faction, and Miyazawa Kiichi, head of the former Suzuki faction (Neary 2002: 74).

Scandals have been a part of Japanese politics for a number of years, but in 1989 both Takeshita and Nakasone were implicated in the Recruit Scandal. A number of LDP members were accused of accepting unlisted stocks from a recruitment company, which could be sold for profit at a later date. While factions are typically eager to get their hands on the party presidency, nearly every likely candidate – including Hosokawa, Takeshita, Abe, and Miyazawa – were tainted by this scandal. Uno Sosuke, Takeshita's foreign minister, served as Prime Minister for two months, but he was forced to resign when his affair with a geisha became public knowledge (Neary 2002: 75).

During the Lockheed scandal, the LDP turned to Miki Takeo because the party needed a Prime Minister with a "clean" political record. The Recruit Scandal forced the LDP to turn to another "clean" politician from the former Miki faction, Kaifu Toshiki.

While Kaifu's unblemished political record may have been desirable, his weak leadership credentials quickly dissolved his small LDP support base.

Conclusion

Factions have been an integral part of the Liberal Democratic Party since its inception in 1955. The party's original factions were formed from groups within the Liberal and Democratic parties. These factions still follow longstanding practices and have outlasted internal conflicts, divisions, scandals, and deaths of key members. This is why scholars have successfully established factions as institutionalized coalitions in the postwar era. However, it is important to remember that factions also have a history of revealing the LDP's fragility. Factions may follow longstanding practices, but the intense conflict over former Prime Minister Tanaka nearly split the party in the mid-1970s.

Chapter 2

I will spend this chapter highlighting a series of major changes in Japanese politics from 1993 until 2000. These issues all have the potential to transform factional influence and behavior. There is a reasonable amount of overlap on these issues. Scandals like Recruit and Sagawa Kyubin gave opposition parties the ammunition they needed to oust the LDP from power in 1993. This coalition government initiated electoral and financial reforms that were supposed to reform Japan's political climate and eliminate the need for factions. Finally, the LDP has had to form coalitions of its own since its return to power in 1994.

Scandals and Corruption

Japanese politicians often wear white gloves as they campaign to present a “clean” image, but the reality is that large numbers of elected officials have been associated with scandals during their careers. While the public appears to be continuously frustrated with this fact, politicians need not worry – with enough factional pressure, even convicted felons may be appointed to cabinet posts (see Chapter 4).

A number of LDP members and faction leaders were tainted by the Recruit Scandal, but none of these people were ever convicted. However, the LDP was hit with another major scandal in the early 1990s. The President of Tokyo Sagawa Kyubin, a parcel-delivery service company, served as a “go-between for conservative party politicians and mobsters by manipulating a massive sum of money from the coffers of his own company for illegal donations” (*Japan Economic Almanac 1993* 1993: 13). In

addition, Kanemaru Shin of the Takeshita faction used Tokyo Sagawa's *yakuza* (mob) connections to protect Takeshita Noboru during his campaign for Prime Minister in 1987.

The thought that the *yakuza* had penetrated Japan's most powerful political party left many citizens questioning their beliefs in the LDP and their government as a whole. The failure of Prime Minister Miyazawa to control the situation made matters worse. Miyazawa's reputation had been tarnished earlier in the year when one of his primary supporters, Abe Shintaro, was arrested for accepting 80 million in bribes from the Kyowa Corporation (*Japan Economic Almanac* 1993: 20). These instances proved Miyazawa's promises of drastic reforms were the same empty promises made by the Prime Ministers before him.

The LDP's Split and Coalition Governments

1993 is clearly a watershed year in Japanese politics. After 38 years of political domination, the LDP was expelled from power by a massive eight party coalition. The Social Democratic Party of Japan, Komeito, Democratic Socialist, United Socialist, Sakigake, Shinseito, Japan New Party, and Democratic Reform Party formed united under a platform that emphasized "altering the lower house's multi-seat system to one that combines single seat districts and proportional representation" (*Nikkei Weekly* 8/2/93). The LDP faced its first major test as an opposition party when the coalition government formed under Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa worked to pass reforms emphasizing proportional representation (see Electoral Reform below).

Hosokawa's resignation in April 1994 gave the LDP an opportunity to return to power with one of the arguably most unexpected coalition partners – the Social Democratic Party. The LDP decided to unite with its old foe during a brief two month

government under former Foreign Minister Tsutomu Hata of the conservative group Shinseito. The coalition came to power under Tomiichi Murayama, the first socialist Prime Minister in 47 years. LDP President Kono Yohei served as vice minister, so the party was not out of the picture. The tripartite coalition of the LDP, SDP, and Sakigake survived until the SDP decided to disband after “having recognized that a commitment to socialist dogma was hardly likely to bring success to the polls given the political winds of the post-Cold War era” (*Japan Economic Almanac 1996* 1996:14).

As the LDP recovered in the latter half of the 1990s it became less dependent on coalition partners and worked with the Liberal Party, a “like-minded ally,” in exchange for a single cabinet post (*Japanese Economic Almanac 1999* 1999:63).

Electoral Reform

On January 29, 1994, the Diet successfully passed historic reforms consisting of four related bills that required the “implementation of stricter rules concerning political funds, introduction of tax-funded campaign subsidies for political parties, implementation of a system of single seat constituencies and proportional representation, and establishment of a government panel to redraw constituency boundaries according to the new system” (*Japan Economic Almanac 1995*: 24). The idea of political reform had been an issue LDP leaders had promised to take on since the end of the Cold War, but these politicians were more likely interested in portraying a reformist image than initiating actual reforms. Many LDP politicians avoided electoral reform because they felt that Japan’s multi-seat electoral districts, antiquated as they may be, were the safest way for factions to retain their power (*Nikkei Weekly* 2/14/94).

Under the new system, seats in the lower house were reduced from 511 to 500. Of these 500 seats, 300 seats would be determined by elections in single-seat districts and the remaining 200 seats would be allocated through representation. This result was a victory for the LDP because the coalition government had hoped for a 50-50 split of seats by single-seat districts and proportional representation. Voters cast one ballot for an individual candidate in their single-seat district and a second ballot for a political party used to determine their party's level of proportional representation. The candidate with the highest number of votes in a single-seat district is elected in a first past the post fashion, but candidates are permitted to run in his single-seat district and place his name on their party's list of candidates for proportional representation. Therefore, it is possible for a candidate to lose in their district, but win a seat under the seats allocated to their party through proportional representation (*Japan Economic Almanac 1995* 1995:25)

Financial Reform

The words faction and money politics have gone hand in hand since the LDP's inception in 1955. One young Diet member said it best:

“I just go and get the money. Policy has nothing to do with it. I go and tell them that I need funds and just get them. Just as much as I need... it takes lots of money to make friends, you know.” (Fukui 1970:132)

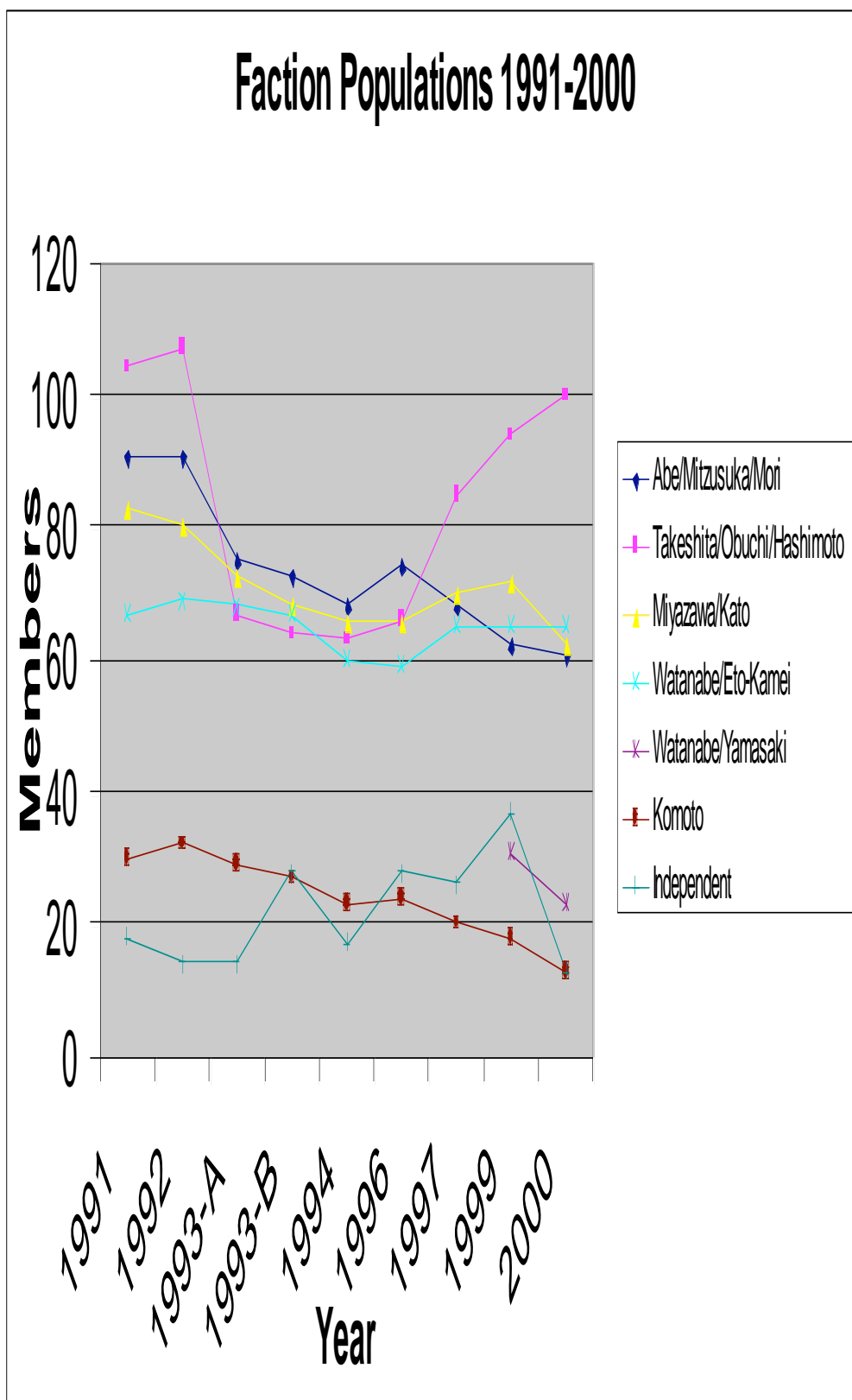
This statement perfectly illustrates the role of money politics in early factions. After the Lockheed Scandal, Prime Minister Miki Takeo created a series of reforms limiting the amount of donations a politician could receive. A weakened version of these reforms eventually passed in the Diet.

The Recruit and Sagawa Kyubin scandals were enough to discourage many businesses and donors from continuing to financially support the party and its factions in the early 1990s (*Nikkei Weekly* 6/20/94). The LDP's fall from power in 1993 also contributed to this trend. This drop in funding made it more difficult for faction leaders to maintain control over their groups' internal squabbles (many younger politicians blamed factions for the LDP's loss of power), but the LDP still managed to influence the Hosokawa administration's plans for financial reform (*Nikkei Weekly* 8/23/93). Originally, Hosokawa wanted to ban all private political funding and donations to individual politicians. The LDP managed to convince the coalition government to pass reforms that only required politicians to disclose the donations they received (*Nikkei Weekly* 2/7/94). The LDP succeeded in significantly weakening Hosokawa's initial proposal.

Chapter 3

There is little known about factions and their role in the LDP after 1993. This chapter will trace the leadership transitions and activities of the LDP's five major factions from 1993 until 2000. This will show that factions continue to flourish despite electoral reforms, members bolting from the party, and attempts to outlaw factions altogether. I have divided the chapter into sections on each faction, including flow charts of their lineages and multiple paragraphs on their actions throughout the 1990s.

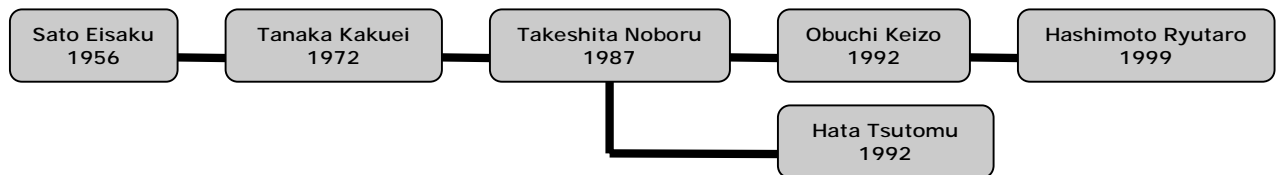
Figure 2.1. LDP Faction Populations, 1991-2000



Source: Seiji Handobukku 1991 - 2000.

The Modern Sato Faction: Obuchi, Hata, and Hashimoto

Figure 3.1. Sato Faction's Lineage



Note: Times are estimated and the distances between each faction leader do not indicate the length of time they headed the faction.

Sources: Fukui 1970, Neary 2002, Richardson 1999.

The Sagawa Kyubin scandal effectively eliminated the modern Sato faction's top level of leadership. Prime Minister and faction head Takeshita Noboru resigned from the LDP after his implication in scandal. His successor, Kanemaru Shin, was also implicated in the scandal a short while later. The back-to-back resignations of these men left the faction without a clear choice for their next leader. This set off an intense intra-faction debate between groups supporting Obuchi Keizo and Hata Tsutomu that laid the groundwork for the LDP's 1993 split.

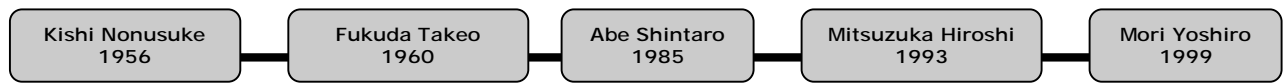
Obuchi succeeded in taking command of the faction, but Hata and his primary supporter, Ozawa Ichiro, refused to fade quietly into the background. Hata and Ichiro rallied the loyalties of approximately 45 faction members and bolted from the new Obuchi faction to form a new party called Shinseito. (*Nikkei Weekly* 4/26/93). The LDP had dealt with intra-faction conflicts for years, but a division of this magnitude was

unprecedented. Hata and Ozawa were the first to remove a large portion of the LDP's support base and created a successful alternative party for conservative voters (*Nikkei Weekly* 12/12/94). In a matter of months the LDP's most powerful faction became a display of the LDP's vulnerability.

The Obuchi faction's membership fell to third in the LDP after the split, but that did not stop the faction from dominating the Prime Minister's office for nearly half of the 1990s (Hashimoto 1996-1998 and Obuchi 1998-2000). During these years the faction tended to ally itself with the Eto-Kamei faction against the Yamasaki and Kono factions. By 2000, the factions' membership had returned to the highest in the LDP, but Obuchi's tenure as faction head ended after falling into a coma.

The Modern Kishi Faction: Mitsuzuka and Mori

Figure 3.2. Kishi Faction's Lineage



Note: Times are estimated and the distances between each faction leader do not indicate the length of time they headed the faction.

Sources: Fukui 1970, Neary 2002, Richardson 1999.

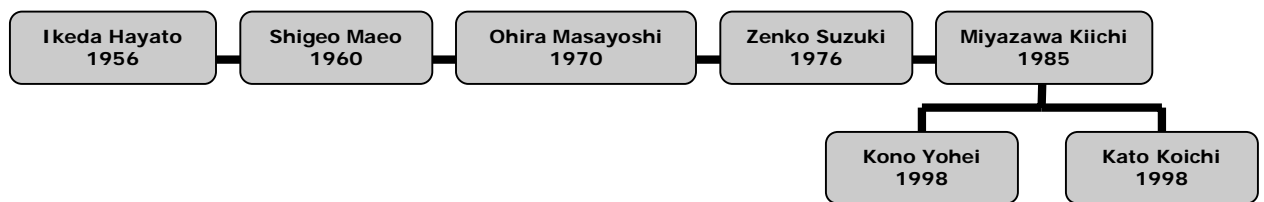
In 1993, Mitsuzuka had high hopes that his faction could fill the void created by the Takeshita split. Mitsuzuka controlled the largest faction after the split, but his personality and allegations of his involvement in scandals made him an unlikely

candidate for Prime Minister (*Nikkei Weekly* 2/1/93). Despite leading the LDP's 1993 economic recovery group, Mitsuzuka's lack of prime minister credentials made it difficult for him to retain influence over his faction (*Nikkei Weekly* 6/20/93). The faction's membership began to decrease after younger members became frustrated with Mitsuzuka's lack of leadership and the faction's financial difficulties during the LDP's opposition years (*Nikkei Weekly* 6/20/94).

However, Mitsuzuka's departure in 1999 has created a new opportunity for the faction. Mori Yoshiro was selected as Prime Minister after Obuchi fell into a coma in 2000. Mori's strong support for Obuchi and strong ties with the LDP's coalition partners likely secured his appointment (*Nikkei Weekly* 4/10/00). At this time Mori's faction remains the third largest, but its future appears to be more optimistic without Mitsuzuka in the picture.

The Modern Ikeda Faction: Miyazawa and Kato

Figure 3.3. Ikeda Faction's Lineage



Note: Times are estimated and the distances between each faction leader do not indicate the length of time they headed the faction.

Sources: Fukui 1970, Neary 2002, Richardson 1999.

In the early 1990s, the Miyazawa faction was bitterly divided over electoral reform. Portions of the faction wanted to implement the single seat districts, while other groups considered the current system more advantageous. This caused Miyazawa, who was also Prime Minister, to avoid taking a stance on electoral reform until Kanemaru's arrest for tax evasion (*Nikkei Weekly* 3/7/93). Unfortunately, Miyazawa's endorsement of single-seat districts proved to be too little, too late. His efforts to balance the pro- and anti-reform groups in both his faction and his party were not unsuccessful. In June 1993, the Miyazawa cabinet lost a no-confidence motion and the Takeshita faction split off from the LDP (*Nikkei Weekly* 6/7/93 and 6/21/93).

Miyazawa may have failed to stop the party from splitting, but his faction retained control of the party presidency after his resignation. Kono Yohei, a non-faction leader, defeated Watanabe and served the remainder of Miyazawa's term (*Nikkei Weekly* 8/2/93). Many predicted Miyazawa's departure would be "the end of an era" for factional politics, but Miyazawa actually worked to preserve factions in the LDP. Neither of Kono's pledges to dissolve factions and appoint "reform minded" candidates to party posts were successful (*Nikkei Weekly* 8/2/94). In fact, Kono's own faction leader, Miyazawa, worked with Watanabe to thwart his attempt to outlaw factions (*Nikkei Weekly* 10/10/94 and 10/14/94).

After Kono's tenure as party president, he led his followers out of the faction to form a smaller, independent group centered on his views. The Miyazawa faction continued under Kato Koichi. Kato officially aligned himself with Yamasaki Taku and Koizumi Junichiro in an effort to give younger LDP members a stronger voice in the party. The resulting "YKK Group" (Yamasaki-Kato-Koizumi) had been discussed in the press for

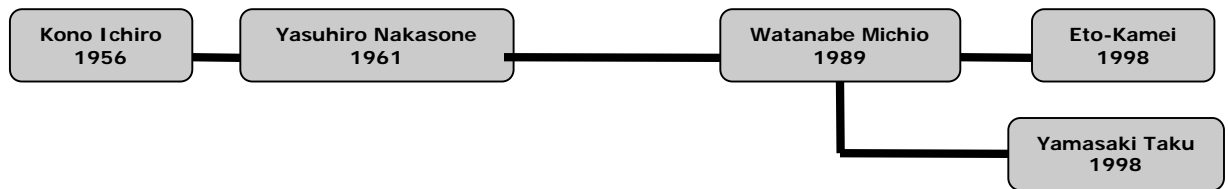
years, but this marked a solidification of the alliance (*Nikkei Weekly* 5/30/94 and 2/1/99).

Kato ran for the LDP presidency in 1999, but his defeat resulted in isolation from Party

President and Prime Minister Obuchi (*Nikkei Weekly* 9/20/93).

The Modern Kono Faction: Watanabe, Eto-Kamei, and Yamasaki

Figure 3.4. Kono Faction's Lineage



Note: Times are estimated and the distances between each faction leader do not indicate the length of time they headed the faction.

Sources: Fukui 1970, Neary 2002, Richardson 1999.

Watanabe became the head of the modern Kono faction in 1989, but his tenure as faction leader was complicated by two significant problems. Watanabe's predecessor, Nakasone, had resigned after his implication in the Recruit scandal. However, Nakasone remained in the faction and older members like Yamasaki Taku refused to commit their loyalties to Watanabe. This intra-party division, however, was only half of Watanabe's problems. Watanabe's history of health problems ranging from gall bladder surgery to "using a hospital as a hotel" forced him to resign as foreign minister (*Nikkei Weekly* 2/22/93 and 3/8/93). His health problems raised many questions about Watanabe's future in the LDP.

Watanabe's frustrations with his intra-faction fighting, the public's perception of his health, and his loss in the 1993 LDP presidential election forced him to take action. In 1994, Watanabe threatened to take his supporters and leave the LDP much like Ozawa had done a year earlier (*Nikkei Weekly* 4/18/94). This caused great concern amongst the LDP elite. These leaders feared Watanabe's threat would trigger more divisions and ruin the party's prestige (*Nikkei Weekly* 4/18/94).

Watanabe's threat turned out to be a bluff that severely damaged his credibility. As a result, he never succeeded in claiming the party presidency or controlling the intra-faction fighting. After Watanabe's death, the intra-faction fighting caused the faction to split into Yamasaki and Eto-Kamei factions. The Eto-Kamei faction was formed after a group of Watanabe supporters lead by Murakami Masakuni merged with a group led by former Construction Minister Kamei (*Nikkei Weekly* 2/1/99). This faction worked closely with the Obuchi faction during the Hashimoto and Obuchi administrations. The Yamasaki faction joined with groups lead by Kato Koichi and Koizumi Junichiro to form the "YKK Group," a younger conservative group aligned against Kamei and Obuchi (*Nikkei Weekly* 2/1/99).

The Modern Miki Faction: Komoto

Figure 3.5. Mike Faction's Lineage



Note: Times are estimated and the distances between each faction leader do not indicate the length of time they headed the faction.

Sources: Fukui 1970, Neary 2002, Richardson 1999.

The Komoto faction provided the LDP with its two “clean” Prime Ministers, Miki Takeo (1974-1976) and Kaifu Toshiki (1989-1991), but its influence in the party tends to be minimal. The faction typically only garners one or two appointments in an LDP cabinet and the positions tend to be less prestigious than those offered to the other factions. In addition, the Komoto faction’s numbers appear to be on the decline.

Independents

The role of independent politicians in the LDP does not receive much coverage because these individuals do not have the finances or the support base to draw attention to their activities. However, there have been two spikes in the number of independents from 1993 until 2000. These occurred during the party’s 1993 split and the first election under the newly reformed system in 1996 (*Nikkei Weekly* 6/28/93 and *Seiji Handobukku* 1996). One would expect to see a steady increase in the number of independent LDP members if factions were indeed on the decline, but that is clearly not the case. In fact, in 2000 only 10 lower house members did not have a factional affiliation (*Seiji Handobukku* 2000).

Chapter 4

As I have previously stated, there are two primary reasons LDP politicians join a faction: campaign funding and appointments. In recent years the amount of funding available to politicians through their factional membership has decreased. This means cabinet and party appointments have now become a faction member's primary goal. Consequently, an examination of factions' roles in appointments is necessary to determine the level of their influence in the years 1993-2000.

LDP presidents have promised to begin appointing reform-minded candidates to cabinet and party positions since Kono's election in 1994. However, this chapter will show that party presidents select the vast majority of appointments based on factional affiliations. Faction leaders still submit lists with potential prospects from their faction whenever party or cabinet positions need to be filled. The party president/prime minister uses these lists to fill vacant positions based on his supporters, seniority, and the necessity to balance factional power within the party.

Party Appointments

The four premier posts in the LDP include party president, secretary general, General Council Chairman, and Policy Research Council Chairman.

Party President

The LDP President serves as the head of the party and in the majority of the postwar era the Prime Minister as well.

Secretary General

The Secretary General's duty is to "assist the President in the administration of Party affairs," which involves running nearly "all major party operations, including elections, personnel, and finances" (Liberal Democratic Party Website 5/13/05). Because the LDP's party president is typically running the government itself, many of the duties one would associate with him fall to the Secretary General. In addition, the Secretary General directly oversees five executive organs and their corresponding Director Generals (see figure 4.1).

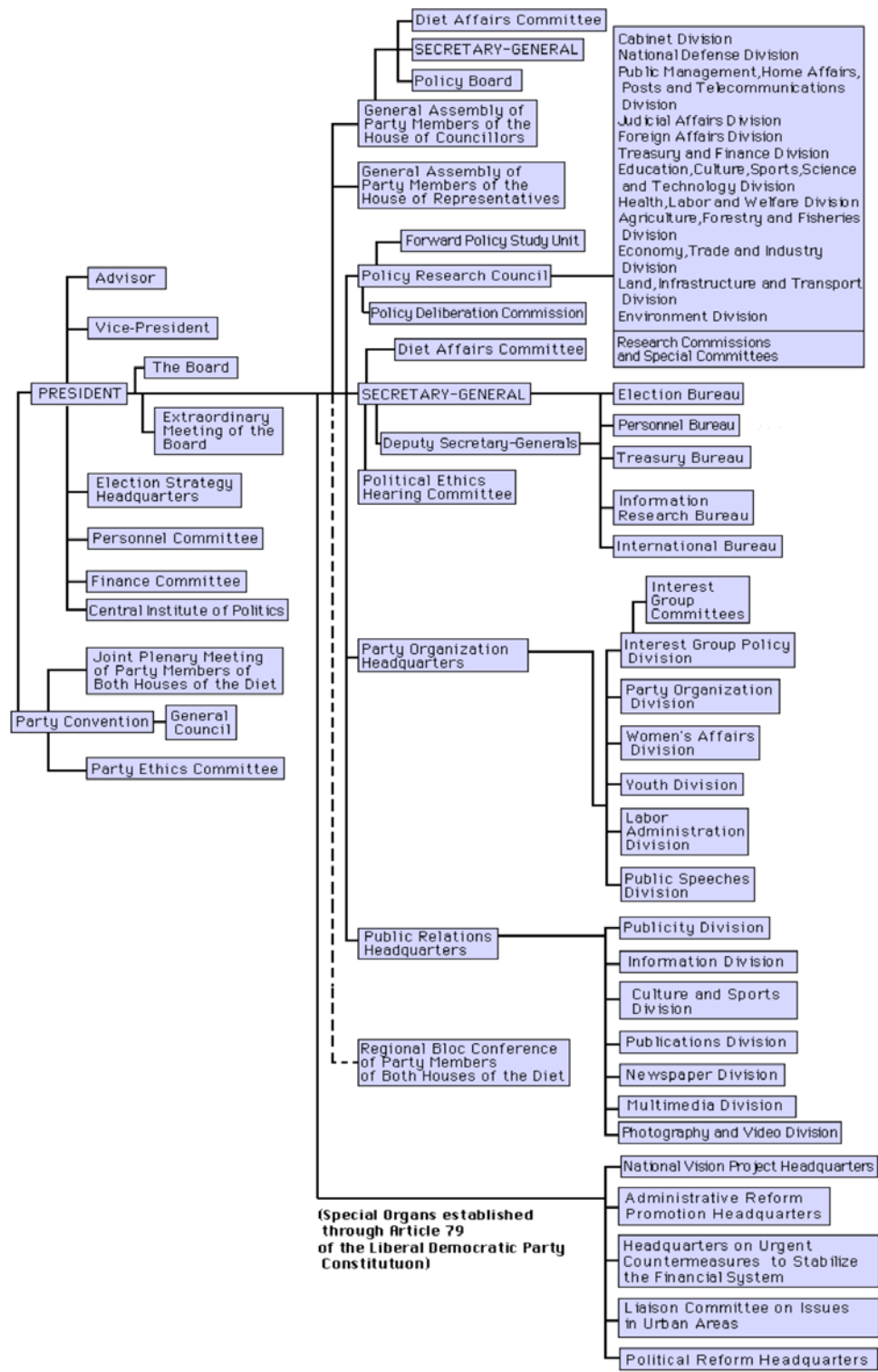
General Council Chairman

The General Council serves as "the party's principle decision-making organ for daily affairs" and "deliberates and decides matters concerning the party's administration, policies, and activities in the Diet." The General Council Chairman acts as the head of this 31 member group (Liberal Democratic Party Website 5/13/05).

Policy Affairs Research Council (PARC) Chairman

The PARC Chairman oversees the complex organization consisting of "twelve divisions, one for each of the ministries and agencies represented in the cabinet" that examine "laws, budgets, taxes, [and] treaty revisions" before their submission to the Diet (Liberal Democratic Party Website 5/13/05).

Figure 4.1. Organization of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)

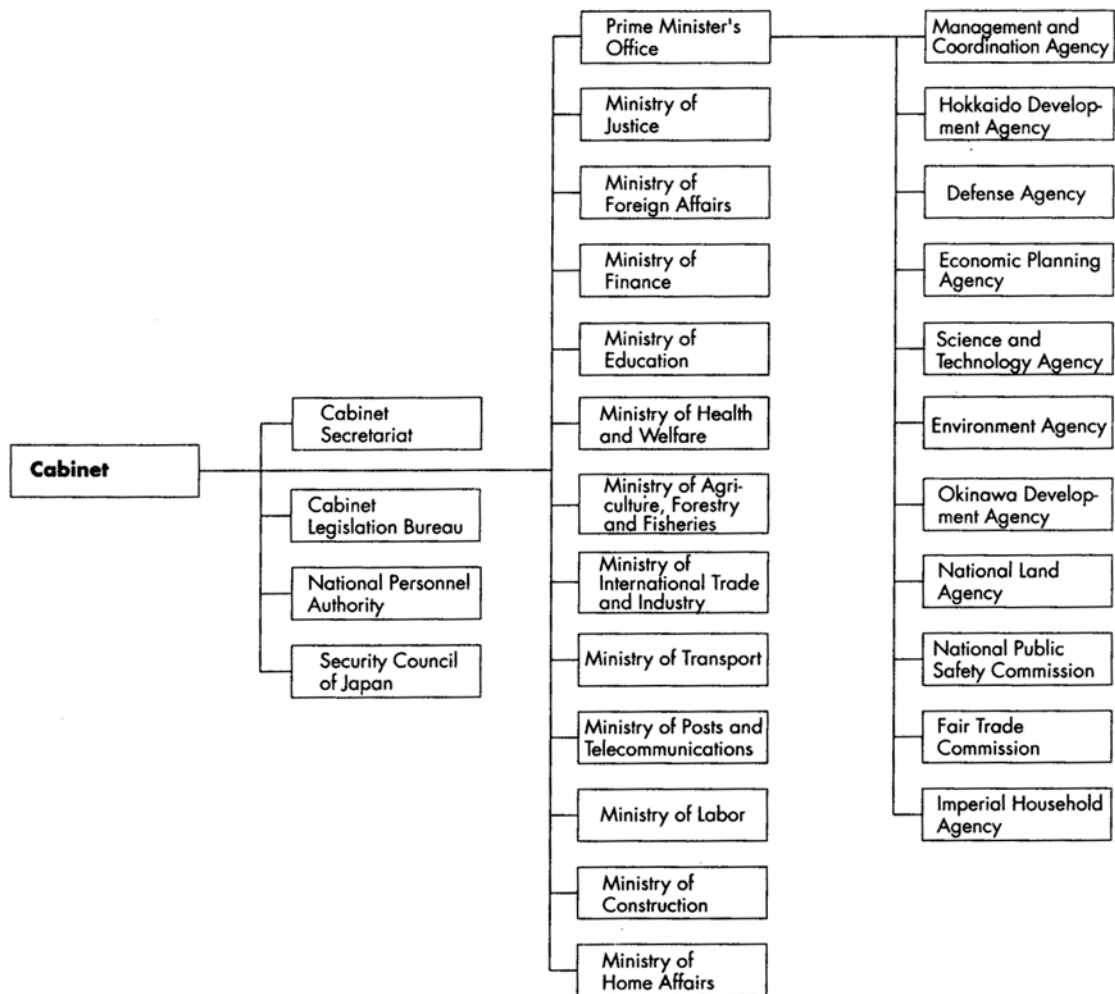


Source: Liberal Democratic Party Website. 5 May 2005 <<http://www.jimin.jp/jimin/english/outline/e-orgchart.html>>.

Cabinet Appointments

The number of members of a cabinet has fluctuated slightly from 1993-2000, because there are three positions a prime minister may appoint at his discretion. Each cabinet member is the head of one the ministries that fall under the executive branch (see figure 4.1). Certain cabinet positions such as finance minister or foreign minister are considered more prestigious and tend to be highly sought after by faction leaders. These appointments are an opportunity for a prime minister to reward his supporters and balance intra-party tensions by appointing members of rival factions to less prestigious positions.

Figure 4.2: Japanese Executive Branch



Source: *Japan Economic Almanac*, 1996 1996:162.

Miyazawa's Resignation

During Miyazawa's resignation speech, he announced that his successor would be chosen by a council of LDP members hand-selected by himself under the name "Council for Party Unity and Advancement." The group was essentially constructed to carry on

Miyazawa's wishes and one reporter described the "council" as "reeking of faction-centered money politics" (*Nikkei Weekly* 7/26/93). When Kaijyama Seiroku, the current LDP Secretary-General, explained the council's purpose to the LDP's membership he was met with immediate backlash. In an extraordinary 2.5 hour session the younger LDP members successfully demanded a secret ballot election instead of Miyazawa's council. However, this apparent movement towards a fair and balanced system of elections was short lived. Hours after Miyazawa's resignation the five major faction leaders, Watanabe, Mitsuzuka, Hashimoto, Komoto, and Obuchi were sitting in a Tokyo hotel negotiating possible deals between the factions to secure power in the election (*Nikkei Weekly* 7/26/93).

Kono Yohei Presidency and the Opposition Years

Deputy Prime Minister Watanabe was defeated in a 208 to 159 vote by Kono Yohei, a Miyazawa faction member who once left the party to form the New Liberal Club (*Nikkei Weekly* 8/2/93). Kono's situation was unique for two reasons: (1) He was a member, not the head of, a faction. (2) He became the first LDP President who did not automatically become Prime Minister since the LDP did not have a majority in the Diet. Immediately after his victory Kono proclaimed his election showed "the majority of party members want the LDP to change" and assured the public he would appoint "reform minded" individuals to the top party posts. (*Nikkei Weekly* 8/2/93).

Table 4.1. Kono Yohei's Party Appointments

Position	Appointee	Faction
Secretary-General	Mori Yoshiro	Mitsuzuka
General Council Chairman	Kibe Yoshiaki	Watanabe
PARC Chairman	Hashimoto Ryutaro	Obuchi

Source: Nikkei Weekly 8/2/93

However, Kono ultimately proved unable to follow through on his promises of reform. Each of Kono's appointments was a prominent faction member that either lacked a record of electoral reform (Hashimoto) or opposed reform altogether (Mori and Kibe). Furthermore, Hashimoto's appointment to the normally prestigious PARC Chairmanship did not give him a great degree of influence since the PARC's role slipped during the LDP's years as an opposition party. (*Nikkei Weekly* 8/9/93).

The LDP's opposition status during Kono's tenure prevented him from appointing a cabinet, but that did not stop the factions from fighting for appointments under the Murayama administration. Near the end of Kono's term as president, he applied strong pressure to Murayama to release him from his foreign minister cabinet post, so he could devote more time to his reelection campaign. This led to a cabinet reshuffle in which parties retained the same number of posts, but the LDP managed to pressure Murayama into allowing Mori, a member of the large Mitsuzuka faction, to take over the Ministry of Construction. The ministry had previously been "closely guarded" by Murayama's party and his willingness to give the appointment to the LDP was considered one of the many signs his leadership was weakening (*Nikkei Weekly* 8/14/95).

Hashimoto Ryutaro Presidency

The two primary candidates in the 1995 election were incumbent president Kono and Ryutaro Hashimoto, Minister of International Trade and Industry. Kono had the support of the Miyazawa, Mitsuzuka, and Komoto factions, which made him the favorite amongst Diet members. Hashimoto was backed by the Obuchi and Watanabe factions and was a considerably more popular public figure (*Nikkei Weekly* 8/28/95). It was Kono's resignation, however, that paved the way for Hashimoto's victory. In his resignation statement Kono cited a frustration with the backdoor wheeling and dealing of LDP politics (*Nikkei Weekly* 9/4/95). Hashimoto's eventual opponent was Koizumi Junichiro, a former Posts and Telecommunications Minister from the Mitsuzuka faction. Koizumi was not expected to win, however, there was a general consensus amongst LDP members that the party would be viewed as weak without a challenger to Hashimoto. Koizumi's support from the Mitsuzuka faction and a handful of members from the Miyazawa faction was not enough to overcome Hashimoto's broad support base among the remaining factions (*Nikkei Weekly* 9/4/95).

Table 4.2. Hashimoto's First Round of Party Appointments

Position	Appointee	Faction
Secretary-General	Kato Koichi	Miyazawa
General Council Chairman	Shiokawa Masajuro	Mitsuzuka
PARC Chairman	Yamasaki Taku	Watanabe

Source: Nikkei Weekly 9/4/95

Hashimoto's appointments correspond with the three largest factions in 1995 – Miyazawa, Mitsuzuka, and Watanabe. Kato Koichi's selection as Secretary-General was based on his early support of Hashimoto, service as PARC Chair under Kono and his

experience as a loyal faction member. Yamasaki Taku is known for his knowledge of defense issues, a common trait of Watanabe faction members. Shiokawa's appointment, however, is more difficult to understand. As a member of the Mitsuzuka faction, Shiokawa and his cohorts supported Hashimoto's opponent Koizumi, so his appointment likely stemmed from an effort to balance the rivalry between the factions (*Nikkei Weekly* 9/4/95).

In a surprise move in January 1996, Murayama resigned after "being widely criticized as weak and ineffective." (*Nikkei Weekly* 1/8/96). Hashimoto formed "a new coalition government, reinstalling his LDP at the center of power for the first time in 30 months" (*Japan Economic Almanac 1997* 1997:5). In this cabinet "posts were distributed amongst 12 LDP, six SDP and two Sakigake members" (*Japan Economic Almanac 1997* 1997:5). While Hashimoto succeeded in returning the LDP to the center stage of politics after nearly 30 months, filling cabinet positions proved unusually difficult. The LDP's coalition with the floundering SDP and Sakigake left many LDP members calling for a call for a general election. Many of the party's high ranking individuals refused to participate in Hashimoto's cabinet until their request was met. In this case, factions were instrumental in that they refused to participate in the cabinet. This forced Hashimoto to fill the position of finance member (a normally prestigious position) with Kubo Wataru, one of Hashimoto's chief critics from the SDP (*Boston Globe* 1/12/96).

Table 4.3. Hashimoto's Second Round of Party Appointments

Position	Appointee	Faction
Secretary-General	Kato Koichi	Miyazawa
General Council Chairman	Mori Yoshiro	Mitsuzuka
PARC Chairman	Yamasaki Taku	Watanabe

Source: *Nikkei Weekly* 11/11/96

Hashimoto earned a second term as LDP President in November 1996, and opted to retain Kato and Yamasaki in their respective positions of Secretary-General and Policy Research Council Chairman. The decision to keep Kato as Secretary-General, at least in some part, was an effort to placate members who felt the Obuchi faction had become too influential. (Both Hashimoto and Chief Cabinet Secretary Kajiyama Seiroku were members.) Kato received his appointment after earning the respect of the LDP's current coalition members, SDP and Sakigake. As member of the minority Miyazawa faction, he also served as a balancing force. Hashimoto's replacement of Shiokawa with Mori Yoshiro was quite straightforward – Shiokawa had not won a seat in the general election (*Nikkei Weekly* 11/11/96).

Hashimoto's cabinet selection process operated more smoothly after his November re-election. Like old times, faction leaders submitted the names of candidates they would like to see in cabinet positions and Hashimoto appointed the faction members accordingly (*Nikkei Weekly* 11/11/96). Miyazawa, the leader of the largest faction, was given the Finance Ministry and Muto Kabun, a former faction leader, became Director General of the Management and Coordination Agency (the body dealing with administrative reform).

While there is evidence of some factional activity in Hashimoto's first and second cabinets, it is his September 1997, re-shuffle that reminded the public of the degree of influence factions have on LDP appointments. After his re-election as party president Hashimoto kept the three primary party officials intact. This made sense because the Watanabe and Miyazawa factions were known to have strong ties with the LDP's coalition partners. However, Hashimoto replaced Muto Kabun, Director General of

Management and Coordination Agency, with Sato Koko after intense pressure from former Prime Minister Nakasone of the Watanabe faction (*Nikkei Weekly* 9/15/97).

Replacing Muto with a Watanabe faction member may have been considered weak, but acceptable, behavior if it were not for one detail: Sato was a convicted felon. Sato had been convicted of accepting bribes in the Lockheed scandal and his appointment created a public relations disaster for the LDP (*Nikkei Weekly* 5/18/98).

Obuchi Keizo Presidency

Hashimoto resigned after the LDP's devastating loss in the 1998 Upper House election. This set up a race between Obuchi, Koizumi, and Kajiyama Seriroku, a former chief cabinet secretary and aggressive advocate of economic reform. Kajiyama was a member of the same faction as Obuchi and Hashimoto, but traded his membership for the support from the Miyazawa faction. Koizumi's backing came from the Mitsuzuka faction. Ultimately, Obuchi's support base was too large to be overcome by Koizumi or Kajiyama, and he captured 225 of the 411 votes cast (*Nikkei Weekly* 7/27/98).

Table 4.4. Obuchi's First Round of Party Appointments

Position	Appointee	Faction
Secretary-General	Mori Yoshiro	Mitsuzuka
General Council Chairman	Fukaya Takashi	Watanabe
PARC Chairman	Ikeda Yukihiko	Kono

Source: Nikkei Weekly 8/3/98

Obuchi claimed his first party appointments were selected on a merit-only basis. However, a meeting took place between Nonaka Hiromu of the Obuchi faction and Kato (Miyazawa faction), and Yamasaki (Watanabe faction) to "coordinate suggestions" for

the top party positions (*Nikkei Weekly* 8/3/98). This explains the appointments of Ikea and Fukaya. Mori's faction supported Koizumi in the election, so his appointment as Secretary General was likely an effort to make amends with the party's second largest faction.

Aside from a few exceptions like novelist Sakaiya Taichi, Obuchi's first cabinet followed the usual routine of distributing posts to faction members based on seniority. This cabinet included former Prime Minister Miyazawa as Finance Minister, which was considered an unusual, but a positive move. However, Miyazawa's resignation four months later, the split of the former Watanabe faction, and the LDP's new alliance with the Liberal party led to intense intra-party squabbling by over cabinet posts by 1998's end. (*Nikkei Weekly* 8/3/98).

Obuchi formed his second cabinet in January 1994, after the LDP's alliance with the Liberal Party (*Jiyuto*) was finalized. This cabinet essentially remained the same as his first, with the exception of Obuchi's appointment of Noda Takeshi as Home Affairs Minister and National Public Safety Commission Chairman.

Table 4.6. Obuchi's Second Round of Party Appointments

Position	Appointee	Faction
Secretary-General	Mori Yoshiro	Mitsuzuka
General Council Chairman	Ikeda Yukihiro	Kono
PARC Chairman	Kamei Shizuka	Eto-Kamei

Source: Nikkei Weekly 8/3/98

In October 1999, Obuchi formed his third cabinet "under a three way coalition joining his Liberal Democratic Party to the Liberal Party and New Komeito" (*Japan Economic Almanac 2000* 2000:153). Obuchi's appointments reflected a desire to

distance himself from his rivals in the 1999 election, Kato Koichi and Yamasaki Taku.

Kato faction member Ikeda Yukihiro was selected as General Council, but he was known to maintain his distance from Kato. The sole cabinet appointment from the Yamasaki faction was Fukaya Takashi, “who was reluctant to push Yamasaki as a candidate for the presidency” (*Nikkei Weekly* 10/11/99). Obuchi also formed an alliance with the Eto-Kamei faction and promoted little known upper-house lawmaker and faction member Aoki Mikio to Chief Cabinet Secretary in an attempt to prepare a successor (*Nikkei Weekly* 10/18/00).

Chapter 5

Factions have existed in the LDP since its formation via the merger of the Liberal Party and Democratic Party in 1955. This survey of factional behavior reveals that factions during the 1990s behaved virtually identically to their earlier counterparts. Numerous individuals predicted the downfall of factions in the LDP after the party's 1993 split and Japan's 1994 electoral reforms. Even the LDP attempted to outlaw factions in 1994. Despite these predictions and efforts, the majority of LDP members still belong to a faction. Furthermore, factional membership remains the key factor in determining party and cabinet appointments.

This leads to the ultimate question: Why do factions really exist? Previous research has established postwar factions as institutionalized coalitions of politicians (Fukui 1970 & 1978, Richardson 1999). I contend that this research remains pertinent to factions throughout the 1993-2000 time period. In other words, factions continue to exist as self-perpetuating groups essential for the LDP to function.

There are a variety of factors that contribute to factions' institutionalization, but I have identified three that I believe to be the largest contributors. First, factionalism is not a development unique to the LDP. Factions have existed in Japan's political parties since the fall of the Tokugawa Shogunate. Second, the LDP's massive size creates a need for smaller groups within the party. These groups provide an efficient means of communication and advancement. Third, advancing in the LDP requires the use of an complex system of personal ties. It is nearly impossible for younger members to advance without the assistance of the faction elites. Conversely, faction elites need the support of

younger members to improve their standing within their faction and the LDP itself. I will now discuss each of these reasons in greater detail to show the full extent of institutionalization in the LDP.

Historical Precedent

Factionalism can be found in the first Japanese political parties that developed after the fall of the Tokugawa Shogunate in 1868. Membership in these political parties was geographically based. Individuals from the same region began working together to advance their interests. However, it did not take long for these parties to look for ways to expand their range of influence. Groups from Tohoku, Kanto, Kyushu, and Shikoku joined together to form the Constitutional Liberal Party (CLP). Each of these former regional groups developed into a faction within the CLP.

Factionalism also developed within the CLP's primary opposition. The Constitutional Progressive Party (CPP) was filled with class-based factionalism after its founders' departure. Tokyo intellectuals founded the CPP, and a rift emerged between the party's intellectual elites and its working class members. Another layer of factionalism was added when the CLP and CPP combined into the Constitutional Government Party. However, the disagreements between the CGP factions proved to be too great and the party split apart after failing to agree over a cabinet reshuffle in 1989.

Japan's dominate political party after the CGP split was Seiyukai or the Constitutional Association of Political Friends. These factions began to behave in a manner that parallels the LDP's present-day factions. Seiyukai's factional memberships were initially based on geographic ties to places such as Kanto and Kyushu. One or two

influential politicians led each regional faction and served as figureheads for the party. Much like present-day faction leaders, Seiyukai's faction leaders assisted younger politicians with their political advancement in exchange for loyalty.

In 1922, Seiyukai's factions began to shift away from their regional ties and focus on issues of coalitions and power. During a cabinet reshuffle, a dominant coalition of factions led by Prime Minister Takahashi Korekiro faced-off with a dissident group lead by two prominent cabinet members. The development of factional alliances and heightening of tensions indicates factionalism had become "the norm of constitutional government" (Fukui 1970: 17). During these years Seiyukai also developed the present-day LDP positions of Secretary-General, Executive Council Chairman, and PARC Chairman.

Seiyukai also used factions as a means of distributing appointments and money. After the Russo-Japanese War, campaigns became more costly for politicians since the number of eligible voters increased. The price of running for office and the rising influence of the *zaibatsu* created an opportunity for factions to formalize their relations with the business sector. Each faction developed an extensive relationship with a *zaibatsu* such as Nissan or Mitsubishi (Fukui 1970: 26-30).

It seems unlikely Seiyukai's factionalism could survive World War II and the subsequent occupation. However, it is important to note that the postwar Liberal Party was essentially the successor to the Kuhara faction of Seiyukai. Nearly 30 of the Liberal Party's 46 original Diet members belonged to the Kuhara faction (Fukui 1970: 28). The party recreated the top positions from Seiyukai, Secretary-General, Executive Council Chairman, and PARC Chairman. These individuals were accustomed to using factions as

a means for advancement and monetary support. Therefore, it is not surprising that the Liberal Party eventually split into factions centered on the party's elites, Yoshida and Hatoyama. These factions also resembled present day factions in that they were dominated by subgroups. Yoshida's faction reportedly had as many as seven groups competing for attention. Despite a massive war and occupation, Seiyukai successfully transmitted its structure to the Liberal Party. This structure was transmitted again when the Liberal Party merged with the Democratic Party to form the LDP in 1955.

Size

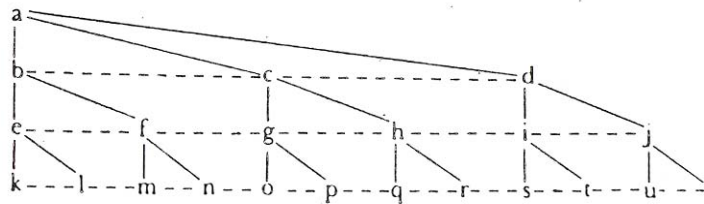
The LDP has over 350 members in the Diet and 2.1 million members nationwide (Hrebenar 2000:126). An organization this large naturally has difficulty communicating. Factions provide a mechanism for communication by functioning as smaller parties within the larger party (Hrebenar 2000, Richardson 1999). Each of these smaller parties is lead by an influential politician who has risen to the top of his faction. It is likely that the larger, more powerful factions will secure the top positions in the party and government, but even the smaller Komoto faction has produced two Prime Ministers. It is unlikely that these individuals would have reached the government's top office if they were not the heads of a faction.

By working as smaller parties within the LDP, factions give younger politicians opportunities for advancement. If a politician continues to be elected, he will attract the attention of his faction's elites and potentially become an elite himself. His advancement may lead to recognition and appointments within the party or cabinet. Essentially, a Diet member's success in his "smaller party" or faction will determine his success within the

LDP. Without factions it would be more difficult for younger politicians obtain the recognition necessary to succeed in a party as massive as the LDP.

Party Structure & Personal Ties

The LDP's factional structure is based on a system of institutionalized personal ties. Fukui has argued that factions parallel social anthropologist Chie Nakane's theories on Japanese society (1970). Nakane believes social groups in Japan can be characterized in vertical groups similar to the one Fukui discusses below:



“The leader (a) is personally and directly related to senior members (b), (c), and (d), who in turn are similarly related to respectively to members (e) and (f), (g) and (h), and (i) and (j) and so on. On the other hand, the relationships between (a) and (e), (f), (g), etc. are indirect; those between (a) and (k), (l), (m), etc. are even more indirect. The lateral ties between (b), (c), and (d), or between (e), (f), (g), etc. are nonexistent or extremely weak. Actually, such relationships cannot be truly lateral, since each member's status in the hierarchy is determined by the closeness of his relationship to his immediate boss and through him to the bigger bosses in the hierarchy, ultimate to the top leader. As the figure above suggest, the psychological distances between (a) and (b) and between (a) and (c) are different; (b) is closer than (c) to their boss, while (c) is closer than (d). This means that (b) is higher in status than (c), and (c) higher than (d), in terms of the intragroup ranking systems. Likewise, (e) is higher than (f), (f) is higher than (g), etc. and (k) is higher than (l), (l) than (m), etc. As Nakane points out, no two members can be of equal status in this type of group” (Fukui 1978).

According to Fukui, this creates a structure where a person's advancement depends on two factors: (1) His relationship with his boss. (2) His success in competing against other party members of his rank for his boss's attention. This system creates a sense of loyalty towards leaders and sub-leaders, but intense competition among party

members. These two factors place emphasis on individual leaders, create divisive pressures within a faction, and disperse power amongst sub-leaders.

The emphasis on individual leaders is a trait that can be observed throughout the postwar era. Succession is nearly always problematic in a faction. The conflict over Takeshita's successor led to the LDP's split in 1993. It is also important to remember that in even if a sub-leader becomes a leader, there are other forces that may linger in the background. In the 1970s and 1980s, Tanaka retained control of his faction after he was forced out of office. Conversely, Watanabe had difficulty obtaining loyalty from his faction after succeeding Nakasone.

This system of personal ties and competition creates a variety of decisive forces. Faction members remain loyal to their superiors, but they are constantly looking for ways to "appear" more loyal than their fellow faction members. This creates conflict at each level of leadership, since each politician is interested in being the next in line to advance in the faction.

These conflicts allow faction sub-leaders to become quite powerful. Each sub-leader commands a group of politicians eager to obtain more power within the party. These sub-leaders form coalitions within the faction to determine the faction's leader. On a larger scale, factions form coalitions to determine the LDP President and often the Prime Minister. Therefore, if a faction head wants to become Prime Minister he must enlist the help of his and other factions. Factions that form the dominant alliance that supports the winning candidate will be rewarded with attractive party and cabinet appointments. For example, the post of Finance Minister is more attractive than Minister

of State for Gender Equality. Faction leaders and elites use their subgroups to secure their position and advancement.

This system of subgroups has perpetuated throughout the LDP's postwar years. No individual has succeeded in advancing to a significant position within the party or government without the use of this system of personal ties. Even former Prime Minister Tanaka, arguably the most influential figure in LDP history, required the support of a faction to ensure his power.

Conclusion

A combination of historical precedents, the LDP's massive size, and a complex system of personal ties all contribute to the institutionalization of factions in the LDP. It is important to emphasize this paper is an exploratory survey into the significance of LDP's factions from 1993 until 2000. The LDP's size, presidential elections, and personal ties all contribute to the continued significance of factions, but more research is needed to determine the extent of each faction's contribution. However, neither the LDP's 1993 split nor Japan's 1994 electoral reforms have prevented factions from continuing to flourish within the LDP.

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